



**Woolwich & Wellesley Townships Elementary Schools  
Pupil Accommodation Review  
Minutes of Accommodation Review Committee Meeting #7  
January 18, 2012, 6:30 – 8:00 PM  
Linwood Public School Library**

The seventh meeting of the Woolwich & Wellesley Townships Elementary Schools Pupil Accommodation Review Committee (ARC) was held at Linwood Public School on Wednesday, January 18, 2012.

**Committee Members Present:**

Paul Milne, Principal St. Jacobs P.S., Vlad Kovac, Principal Floradale P.S., Geoff Suderman-Gladwell, Principal Linwood P.S., Wayne Dunham, Principal Three Bridges P.S., Krista Edwards, Parent Representative Linwood P.S., Brenda Martin, Parent Representative Floradale P.S., Elmer Horst, Parent Representative Three Bridges P.S., Susan Marchiori, Vice Principal Linwood P.S., Christine Shantz, Parent Representative Floradale P.S., Susan Martin Community Representative, Andrew Horst, Alternate Parent Representative Three Bridges P.S., Dennis Cuomo, Manager of Planning, Andrea Kean, Recording Secretary, Lauren Manske, Senior Planner and Nathan Hercanuck, Senior Planner for the Waterloo Region District School Board.

**Additional WRDSB staff present:**

Lynsey Meikle, Communications Assistant.

**Regrets:**

Diane DeCoene, Superintendent of Education, Ron Dallan, Manager of Capital Projects, Facility Services, Nick Landry, Manager of Enrolment, John Scarfone, Manager of Planning, Township of Woolwich, Don Harloff, Community Representative, Sheila Bauman, Parent Representative St. Jacobs P.S., Sarah Peck, Planner, Township of Wellesley, John Krupicz, Parent Representative St. Jacobs P.S., Cindy Weber, Parent Representative Linwood P.S., Steve Snyder, Parent Representative Three Bridges P.S.

**1. Welcome**

Mr. Hercanuck, Senior Planner for the Waterloo Region District School Board opened the meeting at 6:35 pm and welcomed members.

**2. ARC Meeting #6 – Draft Minutes Approval**

Mr. Hercanuck noted that the minutes from ARC meeting #6 were approved electronically: Moved by: Cindy Weber and Seconded by: Christine Shantz. The minutes were posted online and hard copies have been sent out to the schools for the binder.

Mr. Hercanuck led the ARC through tonight's presentation, available online at:

<http://www.wrdsb.ca/planning/accommodation-reviews/woolwich-and-wellesley-townships-elementary-schools>

### 3. Draft Issues/Objectives

Mr. Hercanuck did a quick recap of last meeting's events, noting that there had been good discussion around the Draft Objectives and the ARC had been requested to think about these Draft Objectives over the holidays and tonight they will be discussed further to refresh our memories after the holidays.

#### Draft Objective Discussion:

#### 1. *Ensure equitable student access to a community school by having defined attendance area boundaries that promote a diverse population with boundaries that relate geographically to the community it is located in.*

Mr. Hercanuck noted that at the last meeting the ARC had seemed comfortable with the defined attendance area and community school aspects but had agreed to think about the promoting diversity piece and asked the ARC for their thoughts on Draft Objective #1.

Q: What do you mean by 'defined' and 'equitable'?

R: Mr. Hercanuck responded that Three Bridges P.S. does not have a defined boundary, and asked if not having a boundary is fair and equal to other schools in the area/board?

C: Wayne Dunham commented that an historical exception had been made for Three Bridges P.S. which allows the school to operate without a defined attendance boundary. He also noted that because of the transportation boundary there has been a decline in new students and some families who would like to attend but are not eligible for bussing have chosen not to send their children to any public school at all. The enrolment at Three Bridges P.S. may decline further if a defined attendance boundary is instated.

R: Mr. Hercanuck responded that in his personal opinion to be equitable all schools should have a defined attendance boundary.

C: Mr. Dunham commented that in the past Three Bridges P.S.'s boundary included Elmira and he is aware that there a families there who would be interested in attending if they were inside the transportation boundary.

Q: Should a Board operated school have a defined boundary? And does not having a boundary create an inequity?

C: Geoff Suderman-Gladwell noted that perhaps there are other special groups who would like to have their own school and would also like to have this exception, how can the Board say no to one group when they are offering it to another?

Q: There was an historical exemption for Three Bridges P.S. but is it appropriate and equitable today to be offering this exception?

C: Susan Martin commented that there is a danger to not having a defined attendance boundary; but there are also exceptions to be made for cases such as when a child has a disability and has to attend a school that is accessible, or when a child is being bullied.

- C: Vlad Kovac noted that there are some students who attend Floradale P.S. that might not consider Floradale their community as they do not relate geographically to the school based on where they live. He also noted that if Three Bridges P.S. should encompass a larger boundary, overlapping with other school boundaries, it could become problematic as students could switch back and forth from one school to the next without any policy to control it.
- C: Dennis Cuomo commented that from his experience a shared boundary creates a loophole which does not provide boards the ability to arbitrate a decision.
- C: Christine Shantz stated that it would be best to have all kids in a community attend the same school.

Mr. Hercanuck asked the ARC if they are agreeable to the objective as written and noted that if the boundary relates to the community then the school population should reflect the makeup of that community.

- Q: Brenda Martin questioned how diversity could be promoted as the school could only be reflective of the community it serves and suggested removing the extra wording “*promote a diverse population with boundaries*” from the draft objective.
- C: Geoff Suderman-Gladwell asked if having two schools sharing a boundary divided the resources, noting if the two schools are needed because of enrolment numbers then that’s fine but if they are not both needed that issue should be addressed as there is an added cost to the Board to maintain both schools.
- C: Krista Edwards commented that schools should have a definite attendance boundary area and noted while she would like to achieve a better diversity, she recognizes that it may not be achievable.
- C: Geoff Suderman-Gladwell noted that by selecting different pockets within boundaries one could create a homogenized demographic. Noting that, though possible, it is not recommended. The same could be done to create a more diverse demographic.
- C: Ms. Manske commented that the word “*ensure*” is problematic and noted that what one family might consider equitable might seem inequitable to another. Ms. Manske asked the ARC if they could come up with a better word to use here.
- C: Elmer Horst commented that Three Bridges P.S. is the only school with no set boundary; noting that anyone can attend Three Bridges P.S. if they provide their own transportation. Mr. Horst also noted that there would be a big impact on the community if a school is closed.

**Action Item:**

- **Mr. Hercanuck advised the ARC that the ‘diversity’ piece would be removed from Draft Objective No. 1** and noted that the majority of the ARC agreed that it is more equitable for schools should have a defined boundary.

Q: Is the objective final now or is it still draft?

R: Mr. Hercanuck responded that the objectives will be draft until after Public Meeting #2 because we will want to solicit feedback on them from the broader community.

**2. *Where possible organize school attendance boundaries to minimize distance to school (time on bus).***

Mr. Hercanuck noted that the ARC did not have too much discussion on Draft Objective #2 as it is very straight forward. He noted that community can be looked at as a function of distance from school and asked the ARC if they would like to leave #2 as its own objective or to combine it with the previous objective as they both relate to boundaries.

Q: Will the people who live on the boundary lines have a choice of which school they can attend and be bussed too?

R: Mr. Hercanuck responded no, Board policy is that students shall be directed to the school whose boundary they reside in, no matter how close to the line they are. However the boundaries could potentially be drawn to avoid this situation as much as possible, noting that while you might only have one family on the line in a rural area, in an urban area you might have 120. If the Board were to give the choice to rural areas, to be equitable the option should also exist for urban area which would not be feasible.

C: Vlad Kovac noted that the Board has an [Administrative Procedure 1040](#) – Boundary Requests – Elementary Schools and [Administrative Procedure 1030](#) – Student out of Boundary Transfer Requests – Secondary Schools which may allow a student to attend a school other than the home school if certain criteria are met. He noted that the process is easier for higher grades which have fewer Ministry of Education restrictions on class sizes. Bussing is not provided for out-of-boundary transfers.

C: Geoff Suderman-Gladwell commented that there could be transportation consequences (busses having to go way out of way) if families are situated on the boundary line and given a choice of which school to attend.

Mr. Hercanuck commented that the ARC can look at boundaries and how they relate to communities so entire communities attend the same school; this could also reduce transportation times.

**Outcome:**

The ARC agreed to keep “*Minimize time on the bus*” as a Draft Objective.

**3. *Address student transitions where changes proposed.***

Mr. Hercanuck noted that this objective states that the ARC try to minimize the impact on students with either a transition or implementation strategy such as grandparenting the Grade 8 class so they can finish at their current school. He suggested that this objective could be used to evaluate one scenario against another to determine which scenario would have the fewer transitions.

Ms. Manske noted that it would also be used to quantify after the fact to determine the percentage of students affected by a change.

C: Geoff Suderman-Gladwell commented that for every student affected that change is 100 percent to that student and maybe more kids having to change is better than less kids. The ARC should look at the value of the change and whether it's a good idea and address the transitions after.

Ms. Manske noted that the objective could be used for comparing scenarios and used as reminder to determine whether there is room available to grandfather students.

C: Paul Milne commented that the scenarios might be too complex to determine if they are equal and then look at how many kids are affected.

C: Geoff Suderman-Gladwell commented that change is not always negative.

**Outcome:**

The ARC agreed to keep Draft Objective #3 as written.

***4. Have regard for Board Policy 3002; Elementary School size and Configuration. Recognizing the challenges of rural areas.***

Mr. Hercanuck noted that [Policy 3002](#) talks about recommended school sizes based on a concept of a minimum recommended number of classes per grade: 2 classes per grade for JK-6 and 3 classes per grade for 7-8. Working out to a JK-6 school of about 350-400 pupils and a JK-8 school of 500 plus. He also noted that the ARC has previously discussed the challenges of reaching these numbers in a rural area, which is why the objective is crafted to say 'have regard for'. So while recognizing the challenges of meeting the recommendations of all schools the ARC might try to better balance the enrolments across the schools to ensure more equitable learning opportunities and spread the benefits out as equally as possible, as a result he has added 'recognizing the challenges in rural areas' to this objective.

**Outcome:**

The ARC agreed to keep Draft Objective #4 as stated above.

***5. Support the efficient use of capital and operating resources through the consideration of facility condition and equitable access to educational amenities.***

Mr. Hercanuck noted that the ARC needs to examine the condition, accessibility and equity of the facilities and make recommendations with respect to improving those aspects.

Mr. Hercanuck noted that discussion at the last meeting was in regard to accessibility and as such 'access' was added to the draft objective.

**Outcome:**

The ARC agreed to keep Draft Objective #5 as stated above.

**6. *Maximize the number of students accommodated in permanent capacity.***

Mr. Hercanuck noted that Draft Objective #6 tends to exist in every accommodation review the Board undertakes and refers to reducing the number of students housed in portables and noted that the ARC had not commented on this issue, likely because it is pretty self-explanatory.

Currently Three Bridges P.S. has three portables and Linwood P.S. has two (Linwood's may only be temporary and may not be needed once construction of the FDK addition is completed).

Mr. Hercanuck advised the ARC that this objective would be to reduce the need for portables with any new scenarios and not introduce any more to the area.

**Outcome:**

The ARC agreed to keep Draft Objective #6 as written.

**7. *Maximize the use of existing capacity within facilities.***

Mr. Hercanuck noted that Draft Objective #7 also tends to exist in every accommodation review the Board undertakes.

**Outcome:**

The ARC agreed to keep Draft Objective #7 as written.

**8. *Recognize the unique needs of communities served by different schools through the reasonable accommodation of cultural differences.***

Mr. Hercanuck noted that at the last meeting the ARC had some good discussion around the community Three Bridges P.S. serves and what might happen if the current setup were to change considering the most of the Mennonite community has options, they can attend parochial schools. If change were introduced, how many students would we retain? That answer is likely depended on the options the ARC develops. The Board would obviously like to retain all of the students with whatever changes, if any are made.

Mr. Hercanuck noted that an important part of this process will be to specifically engage this community to answer these questions.

**Outcome:**

The ARC agreed to keep Draft Objective #8 as written.

Mr. Hercanuck advised the ARC that these 8 objectives are still draft and asked the ARC to feel free to email in any further thoughts on these objectives as they can be revised further. He also noted that these draft objectives will be shared with the community at Public Meeting #2.

#### 4. School Information Profiles (Slide 5 of [online presentation](#))

Mr. Hercanuck advised the ARC that the online Draft School Profiles have been updated on the website. Updates were made to the front page (date), Section 1.5 to add the EQAO disclaimer and Section 2.3 to add Cost to Operate the School (Annual). Hard copies of the changes were provided to the Principals at the meeting to replace corresponding pages in the school binder.

Mr. Hercanuck noted that Section 2.1 Condition of School is still outstanding and is expected to be completed later this month once the assessments are completed by the consultant.

C: Vlad Kovac noted that page 11 of the profile for Three Bridges P.S. has an error in “What is the capacity of the school (Ministry recognized)?”, which should read 92.

#### **Action Items:**

- **Mr. Hercanuck will update Section 2.1 once information becomes available.**
- **Andrea to revise page 11 for Three Bridges P.S. and update website and mail out replacement pages so each school can update their binder.**

#### 5. Preliminary Scenario Discussion

Mr. Hercanuck, referring to Slide 6 of the online presentation, noted that this chart outlines the Accommodation Review Process and where the ARC is at present in the process.

Mr. Hercanuck noted that so far we have discussed the issues facing the review area from both the ARC members as well as those brought up by the Board and have used these issues to craft some draft objectives for the Review and note that if everyone is reasonably satisfied with the draft objectives, the ARC can now move on to scenario development.

Mr. Hercanuck advised the ARC that perhaps at the next meeting the ARC will break out into small group to start scenario development and handed out some information packages for homework and asked the ARC members to look them over to before the next meeting and email in any scenarios they might like to discuss. The packages include maps (slide 7) of the area broken down into smaller projection areas label (A-L) with Enrolment Projections (slide 8) by area from 2011-2020. Mr. Hercanuck noted that the projection areas could also be broken down further if needed.

Mr. Hercanuck asked the ARC how they would like to proceed with the scenario development and if they would like Planning to come up with a few sample scenarios to use as a starting point and he requested that the ARC members email him any ideas they might have for a scenario.

The ARC requested that Planning provide some initial scenarios for discussion.

#### **Action Items:**

- **ARC members to review information packages and email any scenarios to Mr. Hercanuck to prepare for February 2<sup>nd</sup> meeting.**
- **Mr. Hercanuck noted that he would provide scenarios for ideas that were discussed at a previous ARC meeting which involved a congregated 7-8 school and a JK-6 school feeding a JK-8 which might help with adding some diversity as some schools have students who leave school at age 14 resulting in smaller class sizes.**

Q: Are you talking about two different schools?

R: Yes, a JK-6 that feeds a JK-8 school or JK-6 schools with a separate middle school (7-8).

**Action Item:**

- **Mr. Hercanuck noted that he will provide other scenarios for the ARC to discuss as well and will also include a Status Quo Scenario for comparison purposes.**

Ms. Manske advised the ARC to use their knowledge of the area to make changes that would make sense for the communities.

Referring to Slide 8 of the online presentation - Enrolment Projections by area Mr. Hercanuck noted that the areas with a letter beside are indicative of school i.e., T represents Three Bridges P.S. and S represents St. Jacobs P.S.

Q: Geoff Suderman-Gladwell noted a difference in enrolment numbers for Floradale P.S. listed at 245 with projection areas A, B and C adding up to 145 and questioned the 100 pupil difference.

R: Mr. Hercanuck responded that Floradale P.S. does get a number of out-of-boundary students due to the historical out-of-district enrolment agreement.

Q: Dennis Cuomo asked if these enrolment numbers could be provided at the next meeting.

**Action Item:**

- **Planning Department to provide numbers for Floradale P.S. out-of-district enrolment for next meeting.**

Q: Paul Milne asked whether the ARC could have scenarios that recommend building a new school or would that require too much money?

R: Yes, the ARC can recommend building a new school and anything that makes sense for the benefit of the students; while money is important it will not be a deciding factor at the beginning of the scenario development process.

**6. Future Meeting Dates/Times**

**ARC Meeting #8:** Thursday, February 2, 2012, 6:30-8:00 p.m. – Floradale P.S. Library

**ARC Meeting #9:** Wednesday, February 22, 2012, 6:30-8:00 p.m. – St. Jacobs P.S. Library

Mr. Hercanuck noted that the ARC will need to have developed solid scenarios to bring to Public Meeting #2 and suggested some tentative dates for Public Meeting #2 and asked ARC members to consider if there are any community events that might conflict with these dates.

**Public Meeting #2 Tentative dates**

February 29, 2012?

March 7, 2012?



Q: Is there a date at which the process has to be finished by?

R: Mr. Hercanuck responded that there is a minimum timeline but no maximum timeline or set end date for the accommodation review process; but would like, if possible, to have the review wrap up before the end of the school year keeping in mind that the Trustees have to receive the ARC report 60 days before they can make their decision.

Mr. Hercanuck thanked the ARC and adjourned the meeting at 8:10 p.m.

---

**FUTURE MEETING DATES:**

**ARC MEETINGS:**

ARC Meeting #8: Thursday, February 2, 2012, 6:30-8:00 p.m. – Floradale P.S. Library  
ARC Meeting #9: Wednesday, February 22, 2012, 6:30-8:00 p.m. – St. Jacobs P.S. Library

**PUBLIC MEETINGS:**

TBD